

June 3, 1976

# Tonet Church Will Observe Its 100th Year

Members and friends of St. Martin's Catholic Church, Tonet, will observe the church's 100th anniversary with an all-day jubilee celebration on Sunday.

The Rev. Sebastian R. Schalk, pastor, will officiate at the 10 a.m. Polka Mass at the church. There will be a pancake and porkie meal served from 9:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. and special entertainment from 2 to 6 p.m.

The church is located three miles north of Luxemburg on County Trunk A and two miles west on County Trunk K. The public is invited.

One of the parishioners, Mrs. Julia Ropson, is older than the church. She observed her 101st birthday on May 29. She currently is a resident of a Green Bay nursing home and recalls her favorite place

of worship was the chapel, which is near the church. Her son, Alex and a granddaughter, Mrs. Emerson Vandenhouten, also belong to 252-member church.

The building of the present church began on Easter Monday of 1876 and was entirely the work of the congregation, which also made all of the interior furnishings.

The first priest to serve the congregation was the Rev. Martin Smits, who said the first Mass on the Feast of Pentecost in 1877. During his term he built a parish house and a church sacristy at his own expense and took up residence at Martinsville, now Tonet, in the winter of 1878-79.

Since 1894 the church has been served by the Norbertines. From 1908 until 1922 the church and rectory were redecorated and stained glass windows, depicting the 12 Apostles installed.

While served by the Rev. Lambert Ambrose Dobbles-teen O.Praem, a noted musician and composer, the church celebrated its 50th anniversary and the priest his silver jubilee. The Rev. Robert Hyde O. Praem, served from 1965-1975. The present priest, Father Schalk, is working with choirs.

Many of the elderly parishioners remember when the church was heated by two stoves, one on each side of the church, centered and between rows of pews. One smaller stove was in the sacristy.

The high church steeple was lowered. Pews, alters and communion railing made by the first members were replaced in 1948-49 with blonde furnishings. A garage has replaced the old barn, which at one time housed horses for the pastor's use. A newer garage has now been erected, the choir loft was carpeted in 1975 and a new chairs replace the old pews.